

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 ROME 11338 141643Z

61

ACTION EUR-08

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00 PM-03 SP-02 INR-05

DODE-00 CIAE-00 PRS-01 /039 W
----- 009916

R 141505Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8841

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 11338

LIMDIS

R.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, IT

SUBJECT: CONTACTS WITH MSI MODERATES

REF: ROME 10619

1. OCCASIONAL EMBASSY SOURCE HAS APPROACHED US REGARDING POSSIBLE CONTACTS BETWEEN OURSELVES AND MODERATE, NON-FASCIST ELEMENTS OF THE NATIONAL SOCIALIST MOVEMENT (MSI). APPROACH WAS INFORMAL, BUT FROM ALL APPEARANCES IT WAS AT THE BEHEST OF INDIVIDUALS INTERESTED IN MOVING THE MSI TO A MORE RESPECTABLE AND RESPONSIBLE POSITION ON THE RIGHT OF THE ITALIAN POLITICAL SPECTRUM.

2. DURING CONVERSATION WHICH TOOK PLACE PRIOR TO JULY 10-11 MSI CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING (SEE ROME 11297), SOURCE NOTED THAT THE DISAPPOINTING RESULTS FOR THE MSI OF THE LAST ELECTION, HAD SUBSTANTIALLY WEAKENED THE POSITION OF PARTY SECRETARY ALMIRANTE. AT THE SAME TIME, EFFORTS TO EFFECT A CHANGE IN THE PARTY ARE FACILITATED BY THE FACT THAT MANY OF THE OLD GUARD AND FANATICS IN THE PARTY WERE DEFEATED IN THE JUNE 20-21 ELECTIONS AND THEREFORE THEIR WEIGHT WITHIN MSI CIRCLES HAS BEEN DIMINISHED.

3. THE GOAL OF THESE NEW MORE MODERATE LEADERS IS TO BRING THE MSI OUT OF ITS ISOLATION AND BACK INTO THE
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 ROME 11338 141643Z

MAINSTREAM OF ITALIAN POLITICAL LIFE. WITHOUT THE

HANDICAP OF LEADERS IDENTIFIED WITH THE FASCIST ERA OR POLITICAL EXTREMISM, AND WITH A NEW POLITICAL DIRECTION, THESE LEADERS FEEL THAT MSI VOTES MIGHT EVENTUALLY BE USEFUL TO THE CENTRIST FORCES IN ITALY. THESE INDIVIDUALS RECOGNIZE THAT THIS IS A PROCESS WHICH WILL REQUIRE SOME TIME, AND AT THE PRESENT JUNCTURE THEY WOULD LIKE TO ACHIEVE THESE CHANGES WITHOUT CREATING A SPLIT IN THE PARTY. AS FOR A POSSIBLE LEADER OF A REORIENTED MSI, OUR SOURCE SUGGESTED THAT A PRIME CANDIDATE IS SENATOR MARIO TEDESCHI WHO IS NOT TAINTED WITH A FASCIST PAST.

4. OUR SOURCE ASKED WHETHER THE EMBASSY WOULD CONSIDER HAVING AN INFORMAL MEETING WITH A REPRESENTATIVE OF THESE FORCES SEEKING TO CARRY OUT REFORM WITHIN THE MSI. EMBOFF RESPONDED THAT WHILE USG HAS LONG BEEN OUT OF SYMPATHY FOR THE MSI AND THE CAUSES IT ESPOUSES, THE EMBASSY HAS ALWAYS MAINTAINED THAT ANY INDIVIDUAL HAS THE RIGHT TO A HEARING SHOULD HE WISH TO TALK WITH US. WITHIN THIS CONTEXT, WE HAVE SEEN MSI REPRESENTATIVES HERE AT THE EMBASSY IN THE PAST. WHILE RESERVING JUDGEMENT ON A POSSIBLE FUTURE USG ATTITUDE TOWARD AN EVOLUTION OF THE POLITICAL DIRECTION OF THE MSI, EMBASSY OFFICER OBSERVED THAT THE ISOLATION OF THE MSI VOTES ON THE RIGHT OF THE POLITICAL SPECTRUM CERTAINLY IS A COMPLICATING FACTOR IN THE ITALIAN POLITICAL FRAMEWORK. HE PROMISED TO SEEK GUIDANCE SO THAT HE WOULD BE IN A POSITION TO PROVIDE AN EARLY ANSWER TO THE QUESTION OF A POSSIBLE MEETING OF THE TYPE SUGGESTED BY THE SOURCE.

5. COMMENT. AT THIS CRUCIAL JUNCTURE IN ITALIAN POST-WAR HISTORY, THE APPROACH OBVIOUSLY PRESENTS US WITH SOMEWHAT OF A DILEMMA. FOR THE TIME BEING, THE MSI REMAINS A PARIAN ON THE ITALIAN POLITICAL SPECTRUM, AND CONSPICUOUS CONTACTS WITH ANY OF ITS REPRESENTATIVES COULD HAVE A SERIOUSLY NEGATIVE IMPACT ON OUR INTERESTS HERE. FURTHERMORE, WE BELIEVE THAT THE ONLY MANNER IN WHICH EVEN A PART OF WHAT IS PRESENTLY THE MSI COULD BE "SANITIZED" IN TERMS OF PUBLIC OPINION, WOULD

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 ROME 11338 141643Z

BE TO HAVE A SPLIT OCCUR WITHIN THE PARTY RANKS. THE IDEA OF TRYING TO REFORM THE PARTY FROM WITHIN, RETAINING THE SAME NAME AND MERELY PUSHING THE DISCREDITED LEADERS ASIDE, WOULD SIMPLY NOT CUT MUCH WEIGHT ON THE ITALIAN POLITICAL SCENE.

6. AT THE SAME TIME, ANY MOVEMENT WHICH COULD SALVAGE EVEN A PORTION OF THE CURRENT MSI VOTES THAT ARE USELESS

IN THE CONTEXT OF CONTEMPORARY ITALIAN POLITICAL LIFE, WOULD BE POSITIVE DEVELOPMENT, EVEN IF THIS IS A PROCESS WHICH WILL TAKE AN EXTENDED PERIOD TO WORK OUT. GIVEN THE SENSITIVITY OVER EMBASSY CONTACTS WITH THE MSI AND THE ADVANTAGE WE NOW HAVE FROM SAYING THAT WE DO NOT HAVE DIRECT LINES TO THE PARTY, WE FEEL THAT IT WOULD BE A MISTAKE TO MOVE PRECIPITOUSLY ON THE QUESTION. WHILE WE WOULD NOT ABANDON OUR PRESENT POSITION OF SEEING ANYONE WHO CHOOSES TO TALK TO US AT THE EMBASSY, WE BELIEVE THAT OUR BEST RESPONSE TO THE PRESENT APPROACH IS TO INDICATE THAT WE WOULD PREFER TO FOLLOW DEVELOPMENTS FOR THE TIME BEING THROUGH AN INTERMEDIARY, NOT FORMALLY PART OF THE MSI, PREFERABLY THE INDIVIDUAL WHO CARRIED THE MESSAGE TO US IN THE FIRST PLACE. IN ANY POSSIBLE CONVERSATIONS WITH THE INDIVIDUAL, WE WOULD ESSENTIALLY CONFINE OUR ROLE TO THAT OF A LISTENER. HOWEVER, WE WOULD ALSO INDICATE OUR BELIEF THAT ANY EFFORT TO REFORM THE PARTY FROM WITHIN IS CERTAINLY A NON-STARTER IN THE CONTEXT OF PUBLIC PERCEPTION OF WHAT THE MSI IS AND THAT THE ONLY ALTERNATIVE, THEREFORE, WOULD BE TO LEAD A SPLIT IN THE PARTY. AT THE SAME TIME, WITHOUT VOICING SUPPORT FOR ANY INITIATIVES WHICH THESE MODERATES MIGHT TAKE, WE WOULD EXPRESS, IF THE OPPORTUNITY AROSE, OUR REGRET THAT THE CURRENT NATURE OF THE MSI LEAVES IT ISOLATED ON THE ITALIAN POLITICAL SPECTRUM. SHOULD THESE CONTACTS PLUS DEVELOPMENTS EVOLVE IN A POSITIVE MANNER, WE WOULD THEN CONSIDER THE POSSIBILITY OF RECEIVING AT THE EMBASSY AT A LATER DATE A SPOKESMAN FOR THE REFORMERS.

7. DEPARTMENT'S GUIDANCE REQUESTED.BEAUDRY

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ELECTION RESULTS, FOREIGN RELATIONS, NATIONAL ELECTIONS, POLITICAL SITUATION, POLITICAL PARTIES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 14 JUL 1976
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ShawDG
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976ROME11338
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760271-0593
From: ROME
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760759/aaaabzxc.tel
Line Count: 145
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Reference: 76 ROME 10619
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ShawDG
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 30 APR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <30 APR 2004 by izenbei0>; APPROVED <26 AUG 2004 by ShawDG>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CONTACTS WITH MSI MODERATES
TAGS: PINT, PFOR, IT, MSI
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006